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POLITICAL TRENDLETTER®

Perspective

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Compromise on Voter Registration Reform

Last year, legislation that would put millions of new voters on the nation's voter rolls passed in the U.S. House of Representatives by a bipartisan majority of 289 to 132. A stronger registration reform measure failed to reach the Senate floor before that body adjourned. Commonly called the "motor voter" bills, the legislation would allow citizens to register to vote at motor vehicle licensing bureaus, other government agencies and by mail. While the legislation is complex and has many legal ramifications, one reason it did not pass in the Senate was the widespread perception that some key members of the civil rights community were uncomfortable with the compromises necessary for passage. There were indeed unresolved questions about the impact of the bill on the Voting Rights Act and fears that its provisions would not adequately protect black and low–income voters from being "purged" from the rolls.

Strong support for "motor voter" legislation has carried over into the 102nd Congress. However, when a voter registration reform bill (S. 250) was introduced in the Senate in January, it became clear that many of the issues raised last year remain unresolved. Because registration reform is so vital to the black electorate, especially during a time of declining registration rates, the root concerns deserve serious attention in order to reach a consensus.

First, the legislation should be clearly drafted so it cannot be interpreted as superceding or in any way limiting the provisions of the Voting Rights Act as amended in 1982. Without such clarity, the motor voter bill could work to the disadvantage of minorities. For example, if a statistical review found that a disproportionate number of blacks had not been registered through any of the provisions of the bill, it could be argued that the *effect* of the motor voter bill, on its face, had been to dilute the voting strength of minorities, in violation of the Voting Rights Act. In other words, judges hostile to the broad reach of the Voting Rights Act as amended could use the motor voter bill as a means of weakening an application of the Voting Rights Act to a discriminatory voter purge.

Another concern is that the bill's language on removing or "purging" names from registration lists does not go far enough to protect voters who are removed improperly from the rolls. There is a fear that inconsistent mail delivery of purge notices to blacks by officials could result in a dramatic reduction of the number of registrants in black neighborhoods. Because black and other minority precincts in New Jersey, New York, Louisiana, Michigan, and other states have been subject to discriminatory purges in the recent past, these fears are not without foundation. Voters should be guaranteed proper notice before they are removed from voter lists, but in the event of an error or inadequate notice, they should be able to vote on election day. That is, they should not have to suffer through a lengthy or intimidating procedure at the polls to confirm their current address, since such procedures could lead to abuses or long lines that would discourage participation.

These unresolved issues are serious but not insurmountable. Reform legislation is urgently needed—it is imperative that all parties concerned come together in a spirit of goodwill to fashion a bill that the Congress will pass and the President cannot successfully veto. ■

Eddie N. Williams

PRESIDENT

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Louis Sullivan's Health Mission to Africa

On February 5, the Secretary of HHS Conducted a Briefing at the Joint Center on His Visit to Africa and the State of Health Care There

The Mission. In his remarks at the World Summit for Children held under the auspices of UNICEF in New York last September, President Bush called upon Secretary of Health and Human Services Louis W. Sullivan and Dr. Ronald W. Roskens, administrator of the U.S. Agency for International Development (U.S.A.I.D.), to lead a fact finding mission to Africa to determine "what else America and the world can do to advance child survival across that continent."

During their two-week mission in January, Sullivan and Roskens, accompanied by 20 other U.S. experts and government officials, met with government leaders and health professionals in the Ivory Coast, Malawi, Namibia, Nigeria, South Africa, Uganda, and Zimbabwe. Assessing Africa's child health problems, the delegates were struck by the devastating impact of the AIDS epidemic and of malnutrition, malaria, and dehydration, particularly on mothers and children. Their report to the President identified areas where cooperation between the U.S. and African institutions can be expanded and the quality of U.S. assistance can be improved.

Secretary Sullivan. An honors graduate from Morehouse College in Atlanta, Louis Sullivan later earned a medical degree from Boston University, also with honors. Over his more than 30 years of service to the healing science, he has not only practiced medicine but has also been a professor of medicine and made major contributions as a researcher in the field of hematology. In 1975, Sullivan became the founding dean and director of the two-year Medical Education Program at Morehouse College. Under his guidance, that program became the Morehouse Medical School, a fully accredited institution which awarded M.D. degrees to its first 16 graduates in May, 1985. In 1982, Sullivan joined then-vice president George Bush's 12-member delegation to seven African countries.

On March 1, 1989, Sullivan was sworn in as secretary of Health and Human Services (HHS), the agency responsible for the major health, welfare, food and drug safety, medical research, and income security programs of the federal government. Created in 1980 from the former Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, HHS has 114,000 employees and is responsible for approximately 250 separate programs. The HHS budget, projected at $625 billion for FY92, is larger than that of any other federal agency and makes up more than 36 percent of the federal budget overall. Following are Secretary Sullivan's remarks.

Introduction. The African continent is a complex mosaic of 500 million people with different languages, cultures, and religions. It is also a continent with massive problems and enormous opportunities. Ours was the most senior U.S. governmental delegation ever to visit some of the countries—certainly in Uganda and Malawi, and also in South Africa except for a brief visit of Secretary of State James A. Baker during the Namibian independence celebration last year.

The delegation found the movement toward democratic government in Africa to be most impressive. Senegal has experienced a peaceful succession of leadership in its multiparty civilian political system. The Ivory Coast had presidential elections last fall. And elections in Nigeria are in the planning stage. In Uganda, democratization has been temporarily set back as elections have been postponed. This has been cause for concern in that country but hopefully the process will get back on track soon.

The economies in these countries are depressed because they are mostly commodity-based. For example, Ivory Coast's chief products are coffee and cocoa, for which world prices have been greatly depressed. The same is true of the other countries we visited. If economic development in Africa is to move forward, large investments from the private sector are needed. In turn, the advance of stable democratic government in African countries is essential if they are to attract investment.

Child Killers. In the area of health, Africa has the highest rate of deaths among infants and children under the age of five in the world. About a million African children a year die from infant diarrhea. Malaria is also a major killer: in Malawi, it is the number one cause of death among children under age five, and we are now seeing drug-resistant malarial strains in that country. But other diseases are also significant causes of death among African children, including encephalitis, pneumonia, whooping cough, polio, and measles. Progress is being made against childhood diseases in countries like Nigeria, which has immunized over 60 percent of its children. In some communities, the immunization rate is as high as 90 percent, according to the Nigerian minister of health. That's certainly impressive compared to where they were five years ago when the rate was less than 30 percent. (The U.S. rate is around 95 percent, though in some inner-city neighborhoods it is as low as 80-85 percent.)

Many African countries have an insufficient number of trained health professionals. My staff will be following up with African physicians and other health professionals to help them develop stronger primary medical care networks. Through our public health service and the Centers

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HHS

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for Disease Control (CDC), we will help these countries expand their epidemiological capabilities and train their health personnel.

There are other things that we are already doing. The CDC is assisting the Ivory Coast in tracking the spread of the AIDS virus and helping to develop public educational and prevention programs. In Zaire, a World Health Organization AIDS project funded by the U.S. is helping that country build its epidemiological capabilities. Zaire has a medical school that was funded through a U.S.A.I.D. contract with the Tulane University School of Public Health. Senegal and the Ivory Coast are also considering the development of schools of public health.

In Malawi, a country of nine million people, there are 150 physicians. But of that total, 120 are foreign nationals, most of them from Germany and the Netherlands and under contract in Malawi. Only 30 Malawian physicians are in the whole country. That country is opening a medical school in September because it has determined that for a country its size, the establishment of such an institution is necessary to meet the health care needs of its population. There are a number of Malawian health professionals in England, Germany, and here in the U.S., where they've gone to train and stayed. Part of the reason they don't return home is the frustration of being trained for the kind of medical system we have here and then going back and not being able to practice medicine in that way.

The Scourge of AIDS. With the kinds of health problems I've just indicated, Africa was already in a bad way before the AIDS virus came along. The impact of AIDS varies tremendously from one country to the next. For example, in Nigeria they have seen very few AIDS patients thus far. At the same time, their testing for the virus shows that in several population groups, primarily in urban areas, the virus infects around four to five percent of the population. By comparison, one person in 200 in the U.S. is infected with the virus. We estimate that in the U.S. we have about a million people infected with the virus, whereas in Africa there are approximately five million infected overall.

In Zimbabwe, the incidence of the virus is relatively low. The same was true of the Ivory Coast, which five years ago had virtually no AIDS patients. Now the Ivory Coast is seeing an infection rate of around 12 percent of the population and that rate is escalating very rapidly. We project that there, like here in the U.S., they are going to see a lot more cases in the next two to five years. That's a major problem for open societies like the Ivory Coast where people move in and out much more easily than in most countries in Africa.

The country where AIDS has hit with full force is Uganda. There, some 23 percent of the population has tested positive for the human immunodeficiency virus (the AIDS causing virus) and it is spreading rapidly. Some villages are made up of only children and old people; practically all of the people between the ages of 20 and 50 are dead—they've been wiped out by the AIDS virus. The country's president, Yowei Museveni, a Muslim who holds very strong religious beliefs, until recently opposed the use of condoms or condom distribution because of his concern over promoting sexual promiscuity. The AIDS problem has been so severe that President Museveni has now become very public and vocal about urging Ugandans to abstain from promiscuous sex or to use a condom if they engage in sex outside of marriage. His wife has become involved in developing plans to care for the increasing number of orphans. There are already 200,000 orphans in the country, largely as a result of the ravages of the AIDS virus, and the number is growing.

The health care infrastructure in that country is indeed quite weak. Makerere University was a fine institution that was internationally recognized and renowned, with an outstanding medical school where a number of medical discoveries had been made. Today its buildings are still riddled with bullet holes—scars left by attacks from former president Idi Amin's soldiers. The library hasn't had a new book in years. While it was heart-wrenching to witness this devastation, I was encouraged by the fact that Ugandans are returning to rebuild the university as well as other parts of the infrastructure.

Based upon my visit, I feel that Africa has tremendous problems which are going to be around for a significant time. Yet there are also great opportunities for the United States to be of assistance both from a humanitarian perspective as well as from the perspective of self-interest. The commodities that these countries produce, as well as their value as potential markets, are significant.

Obviously, as each African country gets on its feet economically, the potential for trading partnerships increases. But it's not going to be easy. It will take time and investment from both public and private sectors. Even though the HHS portfolio is almost exclusively a domestic one, the Department will conduct cooperative efforts with U.S.A.I.D., our primary funding agency for international assistance, to provide health assistance to Africa.

A Time for Advocacy. Finally, black Americans have a responsibility as well as an opportunity to see that the level of interest and support for Africa increases. American international health assistance is only a shadow of what it should be. So far as Africa is concerned, black Americans have not been strong advocates. It is certainly in keeping with our society that when Tip O'Neill is concerned about issues in Ireland, that's appropriate. It's also alright for Ed Derwinski (the secretary for Veteran's Affairs), my colleague in the cabinet, to visit Poland and urge the U.S. to be more helpful there.

The tendency that we have in the U.S. to be less involved in Africa than in European nations needs to be reassessed, both from a humanitarian perspective as well as from a standpoint of promoting democracy. In this country, where some 12 percent of our population traces its lineage back to Africa, we are challenged to educate the public, the Congress, and the President about Africa so that the problems and opportunities offered by that continent are put on the table for policy discussion and action. ■

March 1991

POLITICAL TRENDLETTER®

Inside This Issue:

- Congress reconsiders parental and medical leave legislation.
- Bush appoints black scientist to head National Science Foundation.
- Joint Center survey reveals that the term "black" is preferred.
- Across the Nation: Bettye Davis is elected to the Alaska House; Doris Ward is president of the San Francisco Board of Supervisors; Richard Daley retains mayor's post in Chicago; and Kurt Schmoke gears up for re-election in Baltimore.

Congress Tries Again for Parental and Medical Leave Bill

Labor and women's organizations are prepared to go head-to-head once more this year against powerful business lobbies to battle for the Family and Medical Leave Act (H.R. 2. and S. 5), which would require businesses to allow their employees 12 weeks of unpaid leave in certain cases involving a birth, an adoption, or a serious illness. Last year, a similar bill was approved by both houses of Congress, but it failed to win the President's approval. On May 10 the House had passed that bill 237 to 187 and on June 14 the Senate had approved it by voice vote. But saying he "strongly objected to the federal government mandating leave policies for America's employers and work force," the President vetoed the legislation two weeks later. The House fell 58 votes short of the two-thirds majority needed to override his veto.

This year's bill, which was again introduced by Sen. CHRISTOPHER DODD (D- Conn.) and Rep. WILLIAM CLAY (D-Mo.), differs little from last year's measure. The bill mandates that employers must allow their employees unpaid parental leave to care for a newborn infant, a newly adopted child, or a sick child. It also requires unpaid medical leave for an employee who needs to care for a seriously ill spouse, parent, or in-law. Businesses with fewer than 50 employees would be exempt from these requirements. Any full-time or part time employee who has worked at least one thousand hours would be eligible for the leave benefits, and the employer must guarantee the employee's job security and maintain his or her health insurance. The employee would be required to give one month's notice prior to taking the leave and prior to returning to the job. The bill has bipartisan support and 167 co-sponsors.

Lobbying for the bill is the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) Coalition, a group of 160 organizations representing womens', labor, religious, and senior citizens' groups. Coalition members include the American Association of Retired Persons, the AFL-CIO, Church Women United, the National Organization for Women, and the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees. The coalition was originally organized five years ago by the Washington, D.C. -based Women's Legal Defense Fund to lobby for passage of the first parental and medical leave bill, introduced by Rep. PATRICIA SCHROEDER (D-Colo.). In addition to grassroots lobbying, the coalition has provided Congress with analyses of the bill's impact and with position papers.

Opponents argue that the bill would burden businesses because employers would not only have to maintain jobs for workers on leave but also hire and train temporary employees during the interim. The leading detractors of the bill include the United States Chamber of Commerce, the National Federation of Independent Business (NFIB), and the Concerned Alliance of Responsible Employers (CARE), an ad hoc group of 170 business organizations. MARY TAVENNER of CARE says, "We don't oppose the benefit, we oppose mandated leave. When you start mandating a benefit, you hurt an employer's ability to run his shop."

CAROLYN MILLER of NFIB says the business community would prefer that decisions on employee benefits

be determined between employer and employee. Miller says, "To impose the mandate is to harm the businesses' flexibility and productivity. It's anti-business and anti-employee."

Nevertheless, according to **NICOLE GUERON** of the Women's Legal Defense Fund, the FMLA Coalition is optimistic about approval of the bill this year. Gueron says business support is growing and leaders like **LAWRENCE PERLMAN**, CEO of Control Data, a Fortune 500 company, have come out in support of the bill. Supporters are hoping that newly appointed Labor Secretary **LYNN MARTIN**, who voted for the bill last year as a Republican congresswoman from Illinois, will lobby the White House. Last year, coalition members divided their energies between the leave bill, the child care bill, and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Gueron says since the child care bill and the ADA were approved, the leave bill can now benefit from the coalition's full attention.

JANE O'GRADY of the AFL-CIO says, "The bill is a labor benefit that all workers should enjoy. As more members of the family become a part of the American workforce, it would seem that employers would want to make some accommodations." She adds, "There is a need for this type of employee benefit, many businesses already have it, and it [the bill] is not an overwhelming burden on business." The full House may consider the bill before mid-April.

Black Physicist Takes the Helm at National Science Foundation

In February the U.S. Senate confirmed President Bush's nomination of black physicist WALTER E. MASSEY to head the National Science Foundation (NSF) in Washington, D.C. Considered by many to be one the nation's top research scientists, Massey becomes the second black person to direct the 41-year-old independent federal agency, which is charged with strengthening education and research in science and engineering at all levels. The foundation's first black director was JOHN B. SLAUGHTER, who served from 1980 to 1982. Slaughter is now president of Occidental College in Los Angeles, California.

Massey, a 52-year-old native of Hattiesburg, Mississippi, has been vice president for research at The University of Chicago and director of the Argonne National Laboratory. He has also served as professor of physics at the University of Illinois and Brown University. A graduate of Morehouse College, Massey received an M.S. and Ph.D. in physics from Washington University in St. Louis, Missouri. He has been a member of the National Science Board, the board of directors of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, and President Bush's Council of Advisers on Science and Technology.

In his confirmation testimony before the Senate Labor and Human Resources Committee, Massey stated that the United States must work to reclaim its position as a world leader in scientific research and development. He noted that in the past decade the governments of Japan and Germany have dedicated proportionally almost twice the funding to non-defense research and development as has the United States. Massey believes this trend threatens our nation's technological and economic competitiveness abroad. "The nation's ability to compete in the international marketplace, is based on important advances in science and engineering and the ability to introduce them into the market quickly, efficiently, and creatively," he says.

According to Massey, the United States faces two basic challenges: to "improve the quality of science and engineering education at all levels, and increase the number of people knowledgeable about science and engineering." During the last 10 years, he notes, the number of Americans receiving Ph.D.s in science and engineering has declined, and the proportion obtained by minorities is woefully inadequate. "Only eight percent of the bachelor's degrees and four percent of the Ph.D.s in science and engineering are awarded to blacks and Hispanics, while the numbers of high school and college-aged women interested in scientific and engineering fields are only a fraction of those of their male counterparts," he notes. Massey hopes to strengthen NSF initiatives to interest undergraduate and precollege students, including minorities, in pursuing the sciences. One such initiative is the Alliance for Minority Participation (AMP), a year-old program to which the NSF, colleges and universities, and the private sector have contributed in order to attract and retain minorities in bachelor's and advanced degree programs in science and engineering.

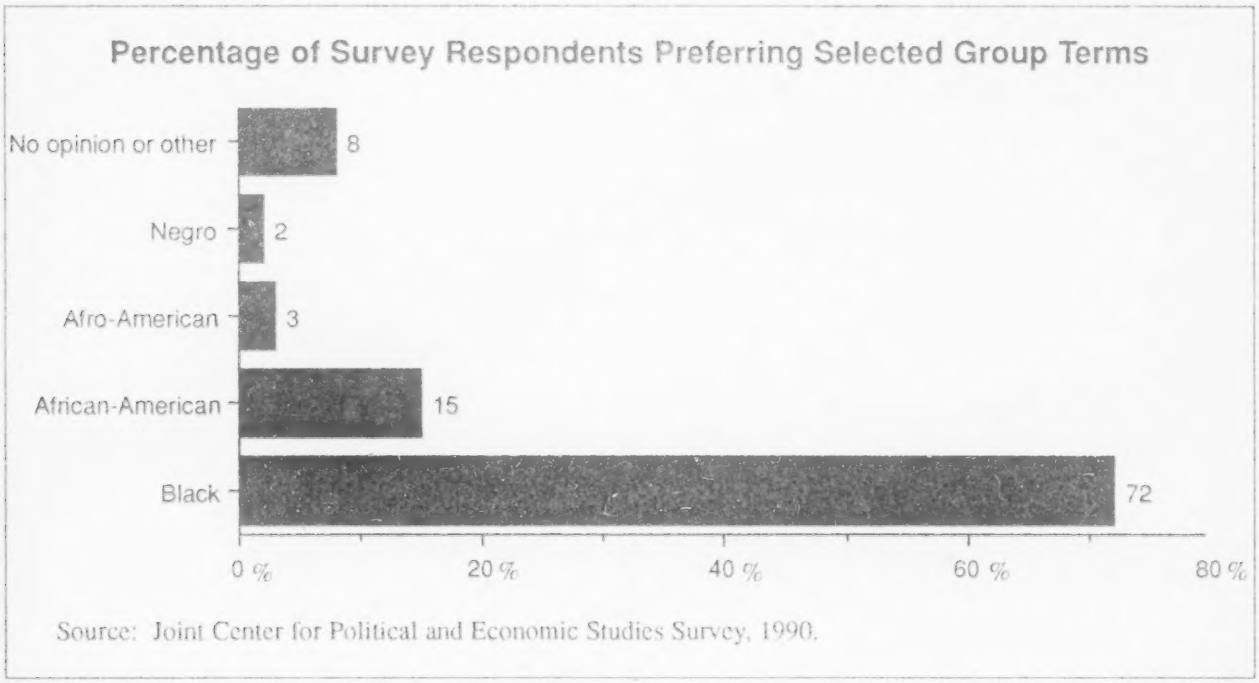
Massey does not plan to impose any sweeping changes in the administration or direction of NSF. "We're

headed in the right direction," he says. His first priority is to get Congress to approve the President's budget proposal for the foundation. The budget calls for a 17.5 percent increase over last year's funding, bringing the total to $2.72 billion for fiscal year 1992. NSF, which currently has a budget of $2.2 billion, awards grants to academic research institutions, private research firms, industrial labs, and major research facilities and centers.

Survey Reveals Preference for the Term "Black"

According to the Joint Center's annual nationwide survey, black Americans prefer to use the term "black" rather than the term "African-American" to describe themselves. Of the 759 black persons randomly sampled, 72 percent preferred the term "black," 15 percent "African American," three percent "Afro-American," and two percent "Negro." Eight percent had no opinion or liked other terms.

The poll was conducted nationwide by telephone between August 31 and October 4, and had a sampling error of plus or minus three percentage points. The survey found some regional differences: In the East, the term "black" was preferred by 72 percent, in the Midwest by 76 percent, in the South by 85 percent, and in the West by 78 percent. The term "African-American" was more popular among those with a college education than those who had not gone beyond high school; the former group preferred the term by a margin of 20 percent to 15 percent. It was least favored by older respondents: 17 percent of those over age 50 preferred "African-American," compared with 19 percent of those age 30 to 49 and 28 percent of those age 18 to 29.



Source: Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies Survey, 1990.

Join Us at Our Annual Dinner

We are pleased to invite you to our 14th annual dinner on Tuesday, April 9, 1991. The dinner, saluting black women in politics, will be held at the Washington Hilton Hotel here in the nation's capital. Our keynote speaker will be the mayor of the District of Columbia, Sharon Pratt Dixon. Robert E. Allen, chairman and CEO of the American Telephone & Telegraph Company, is this year's national dinner chairman. The dinner, which is the Joint Center's only fundraising event, provides significant support for our research and outreach programs. This year's prices for 10-seat tables are: Chairman's Circle, $10,000; Sponsors', $5,000; Patrons', $3,000. Individual tickets are also available for $300 each. For reservations or further information please call Alfreda Edwards at (202) 626-3555.

ACROSS THE NATION

ALASKA: In November, Democrat BETTYE J. DAVIS became the first black woman elected to the Alaska state legislature. She now represents District 14B, which includes the state's largest city, Anchorage. A retired social worker and former member of the Anchorage Board of Education, Davis is also the first Democrat to represent the majority Republican district. The seat was held by black Republican WALT FURNACE, who vacated it last year to run, unsuccessfully, for the state senate. Unopposed in the August primary, Davis beat white Republican CHUCK DICKEY in the general election by one percentage point.

A native of Louisiana, Davis came to the Last Frontier State 18 years ago and has been active in the NAACP, the Women's Political Caucus, and the National Alliance of Black School Educators. In the Alaska House of Representatives, she has been assigned as chair of the Children's Caucus and vice chair of the Health, Education and Social Services Committee. She also serves on the Community and Regional Affairs Committee and the Special Committee on International Trade and Tourism.

The first black member of Alaska's legislature was BLANCHE PRESTON McSMITH, a Democrat, who was appointed to fill a vacancy in 1959 and served for one term.

CALIFORNIA: In January, San Franciscan DORIS M. WARD was sworn in as the first black president of the city's 11 member board of supervisors. A Democrat, Ward is an 11 year veteran of the board, which currently has one other black member, WILLIE KENNEDY.

During her tenure on the board, Ward has served on several committees, including Health, Civil Service, Finance, and Land Use. She currently chairs the Economic and Social Policy committees. Known for her expertise on land use, housing, and minority contracting, she has worked to retain affordable and low-income housing and is currently sponsoring the San Francisco Assisted Housing Preservation Ordinance. **Ward has sponsored legislation to bring cable television and telecommunications franchising to the city. She has cosponsored legislation to improve city contract opportunities for blacks and women and for rallying board support for legislation requiring the maintenance of statistics on hate crimes.**

ILLINOIS: After a campaign described as low-key, uneventful, and boring by members of the press, Chicago Mayor RICHARD M. DALEY glided to victory in the February 26 Democratic mayoral primary, claiming 63 percent of the vote. The 48-year old son of former mayor and Democratic Party machine boss RICHARD J. DALEY beat three opponents—black Cook County commissioner DANNY DAVIS, former mayor JANE BYRNE, and LYNDON LAROUCHE follower SHELIA JONES. Daley's victory almost assures him election on April 2 to his first full, four-year term as mayor. His current term began in April 1989 when he was elected to fill out the two years remaining to the late Mayor HAROLD WASHINGTON, who died in November 1987, seven months into his second term. Washington was the city's first black mayor. Black Democratic alderman EUGENE SAWYER was elected interim mayor by the board of aldermen and he served from Washington's death to Daley's election.

Davis and Byrne, who were considered Daley's strongest opponents, received 30 percent and six percent of the vote, respectively. Pundits considered Byrne's bid an act of vengeance against Daley, whose 1983 mayoral campaign to gain her seat divided the white vote. That division, combined with Byrne's alienation of the black community and tremendous black support for Harold Washington, had led to Washington's victory.

Davis was an alderman for 11 years before being elected to the County Board of Commissioners in November. In December, a group of black political leaders, led by Democratic Congressman GUS SAVAGE, selected Davis as the consensus black candidate to challenge Daley. However, Daley received endorsements from prominent figures in the black community, including Rev. CLAY EVANS, the pastor of Fellowship Baptist Church, one of the city's largest and oldest black churches. Daley was also supported by some black business leaders, including ALVIN BOUTTE, board chairman of Independence Bank, and CERILLO McSWEEN, owner of a chain of McDonald's restaurants. McSween held a $200-a-plate breakfast in Daley's honor. These endorsements and Davis's lack of campaign and advertising funds made it difficult for him to consolidate support among black voters.

MELODY SPANN, news director at Chicago's WVON radio station, says that although Davis is well regarded among blacks, he is not charismatic. Historically, she says, black Chicagoans do not vote in great numbers, and the 1983 momentum built around Washington was "the exception, not the rule." Says Spann, "Daley will have to really do something terrible or offend the black community before blacks will come out in droves to defeat him or to elect another black mayor."

Daley will face two opponents in the April general election, both long shots: Republican city police sergeant GEORGE GOTTLIEB and retired federal judge and former Democrat R. EUGENE PINCHAM. Pincham is the candidate of the city's black alternative third party, the Harold Washington Party. (See January 1991 Focus, "Windy City's Controversial Third Party.")

Next Round for Voter Registration Reform

After Legislation Designed to Expand Voter Rolls Failed Last Year, a New Proposal Is Being Debated On and Off Capitol Hill

by Marsha Nye Adler

During last November's general election, the *New York Times* surveyed adults nationwide to create a profile of nonvoters. The *Times* found nothing new: as in the past, today's nonvoters are younger than their voting counterparts, more mobile, less likely to have attended college, and more apt to have incomes under $30,000. They do not have strong party feelings, and are fairly equally divided in their leanings toward Republican and Democratic candidates. Yet while the nonvoters' profile hasn't changed, their numbers have grown steadily over the past 30 years. They represented only about 36 percent of the eligible population in 1990, so that for every person who cast a ballot that year, two others passed up their voting right.

Legislation introduced in Congress last year to spur voter participation passed the House by a convincing margin, though it failed adoption by the Senate. This year, a similar bill, S. 250, has been put forward with bipartisan sponsorship in the Senate. Like its 101st Congress predecessor, S. 250 has detractors who fear fraud, the cost of reform, and infringement of states rights. Some within the civil rights community are wary that the bill would make it too easy for states to "purge" citizens from voter rolls. Nevertheless, political observers give this bill a better chance of passage than last year's proposal.

Turned Off or Turned Away?

The Senate bill deserves passage because, for all the attention paid to the psyche of the nonvoter, this bill addresses a simple and fixable problem directly linked to low participation: the difficulty of registering to vote. In survey after survey, the reason cited by most nonvoters for not going to the polls is that they were not registered. Seventy million Americans fit into that category, more than a third of the eligible pool.

There is strong, growing evidence that a large number of nonvoters are not just "turned off" but, rather, are being discouraged from voting. The percentage of registered people who actually vote is high—86 percent in 1988. If the participation of registered voters is so high, registration itself is clearly the key to raising turnout. In many areas, voter registration systems have changed little over the last century, growing increasingly out of sync with citizens' lives. In half the states, voters must register in person at designated sites, at appointed—and sometimes very limited—hours and days, and early, sometimes 30 days before an election. Often sites are open only when citizens must be somewhere else, generally at work or college some distance away. Many sites are hard to get to and hard to find. Registering to vote is, therefore, all too easy to put off or forget about entirely.

In addition, for the vast majority of citizens registering once is not enough. Voters who move must re-register. In today's transient society that affects more and more people, particularly those who are younger and poorer. Currently, all but eight states automatically cancel registration for failure to vote. All but six of the remaining 42 states purge voters from the rolls for failure to vote within a period of four years or less. Thus, even if an individual is still eligible and lives at the same address, he or she can be removed from the rolls. Almost half the states that purge fail to provide nonvoters with the forms they need to re-register, and many states do not notify people that they have been dropped from the list. These people may only learn of their status when they arrive to cast a ballot on election day, too late to re-register and participate.

The Key to Increased Turnout

As Minnesota, Nevada, and the District of Columbia are learning, the problem of low voter registration can be remedied through a series of simple, low-cost reforms. There is ample evidence that such measures as mail-in agency-based registration and election-day registration are working. In states that have introduced these changes both registration and turnout have improved.

By far the most effective technique for increasing voter registration is agency based. The most widespread agency-based method is the "motor voter" system, administered by motor vehicle departments. Motor voter programs add a response section on either the drivers license application form or the computerized questionnaire to allow the applicant to register to vote. In the most effective of these programs, such as those in Minnesota and the District of Columbia, agency staff, help applicants fill out the information.

The District of Columbia set a new turnout record in the

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Ms. Adler is project director of Extension Program Resources at the National Association of State Universities and Land Grant Colleges. She was recently deputy director of public policy for People for the American Way.

Registration

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1990 mid-term election, surpassing the presidential election turnout of 1988, after raising voter registration by 26 percent in the four years since 1986. More than 75 percent of the new registrations came from the District's newly implemented motor voter program. Emmett Fremaux, the director of Washington's elections board, says, "the fact that a new record has been set in a non-presidential year indicates that a fundamental increase in voter registration has occurred in the District."

Four states that have used similar means have increased their turnout dramatically. Nevada, which in 1986 ranked near the bottom in participation, registered 54,000 new voters in 1990 through its newly instituted motor voter program. It raised turnout by two percent in what would ordinarily have been expected to be a classic low-turnout election, one with no statewide races. North Carolina registered 84,000 voters in 1990, raising turnout from 1986 by 20 percent. In Minnesota the combination of election-day, motor voter, agency-based, and mail-in registration has assured nearly 90 percent registration and an increase in turnout from 1986 of 25 percent. Another election-day registration state, Maine, raised its turnout between 1986 and the 1990 election by 13 percent after adding a motor voter program of its own.

Making Reforms Universal

It is on these successful state programs that congressional legislation has been modeled. In February, 1990, the U.S. House of Representatives voted 289 to 132 to require states to institute motor voter, agency-based, and mail-in registration. The bill also required a guarantee that the purging of voter rolls would be nondiscriminatory. The Senate considered its version of the legislation this past September, but end-of-Congress maneuvering blocked a floor vote. On January 23, 1991, Senators Wendell Ford (D-Ky.) and Mark Hatfield (R-Ore.) introduced S. 250, the National Voter Registration Act, and pledged to move the bill in the first months of the session. A House bill, similar to the one the House passed last year, is expected to be introduced in late March or early April.

One key provision of the Senate bill is that voter registration would become automatic for people applying for a drivers license or a photo I.D. card at state motor vehicle departments. While 13 states currently have some motor voter program, only the federal legislation offers this feature of automatic registration. The Senate bill also requires states to make registration forms widely available and for government employees to provide assistance in completing the forms. The bill includes agency-based registration at public schools, libraries, and vocational rehabilitation centers, as well as at government offices such as welfare and unemployment agencies. Mail registration, now available in half the states, would be expanded to all of them. Mail-in forms must be made available for public and private sector distribution, and states may be required to adopt a uniform federal application form. Registrants must not be required to notarize their applications, and strong penalties would be levied for harassment and fraud. The bill provides for recovery of attorneys' fees and costs.

Finally, S. 250 prohibits purging names from voter rolls because of nonvoting. Voters could only be removed from the rolls if they had died, moved, or had become ineligible for other reasons. The measure allows for cleaning of voter lists only when conducted in a uniform and non-discriminatory manner, and prohibits list cleaning within 60 days of a federal election. Both political parties have already voiced full support for this 60-day provision.

There remain some questions about the method of notifying voters who appear to have moved, and about how to protect the rights of voters who have inadvertently been removed from the rolls. Congressional leaders are working toward a consensus on the most effective registration mechanism with the greatest protections for voters.

Fear of Fraud

Perhaps the most potent argument opponents have raised has been that opening the system would create new opportunities for election fraud. Attacking reforms like election-day registration, for example, anti-immigration groups have raised the specter of thousands of unqualified voters descending on the polls and changing the outcome of elections. Yet in the three states that have instituted election day sign-up—Minnesota, Maine, and Wisconsin—there has been no rise in voter fraud. Studies of states that have instituted other reforms included in the federal bills show no increase in fraud by voters or election officials. Agency-based registration is also the most fraud-proof because registering agencies already require extensive documentation for licenses and benefits.

Election officials have been uneasy about the cost of reforms, but in the states that have them, new programs are inexpensive to administer. With statewide computerization of offices, the cost is minimal. Washington State estimates that registering voters through its fully computerized system will cost just 50 cents for each new registrant.

Even in jurisdictions such as Minnesota, Nevada, Colorado, and the District of Columbia, which do not use computerized systems in their highly effective motor voter programs, the cost is similarly low. Minnesota estimates that it spends 35 cents for each transaction. The District of Columbia's estimated cost is just three cents per voter. Congressional sponsors of reform legislation are considering ways to defray the cost of the federal program through grants and postal rate savings.

Opponents of federally mandated voter registration reform often fall back on the argument that elections and registration are traditionally state functions on which Congress should not legislate. Through the Voting Rights Act of 1965 and other legislation, however, Congress has been given the right to regulate in areas where there is a clear

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Keeping History as Important as Making It

Black Officials Must Take Responsibility for Contributing to American Political History by Preserving Their Papers and Political Memorabilia

by Auriel Pilgrim

Joseph Hayne Rainey, elected in 1870 from South Carolina, was the first black person to serve in the U.S. House of Representatives. But although he served four full terms in Congress, little is known about this American political pioneer. There are no firsthand accounts of how he entered politics, became affiliated with the Republican Party, or was selected to run for office. Of his personal correspondence, only one letter has been passed down. No other original documents have survived. The same is generally true of the 22 other black members of Congress who served during the late 19th century. Moreover, during that period almost no institutions served as repositories for such materials.

Primary source documentation of the achievements of other black Americans who have played important political roles is similarly incomplete. P. J. Gibbs, author of *Black Collectibles Sold in America*, notes that "items such as pamphlets about black socialists in the 1930s and 1940s or black candidates for local, state, and national offices prior to the 1950s and 1960s are very scarce. Most of the political items come from the 1960s, which marked a time of political upheaval in the United States for blacks and whites. Although these items are of recent vintage, they are extremely scarce and expensive. . . ."

By documenting their own march through the political process, officials can play a vital role in preserving America's black political heritage. But too often, the position papers, speeches, buttons, posters, bumper stickers, and other campaign accouterments of black candidates and officials are scattered and lost. The same fate has attended their official papers recording their subsequent conduct and accomplishments in office. It is important that they keep records of everything from the outset of their careers, both as markers for those who follow them in public service and to preserve the authenticity of the historical record.

Safeguarding Primary Source Material

History cannot be left solely to historians, political scientists, and journalists. The interpretations found in their works, while essential, will always reflect the bias of the author. The only objective check on those biases must come from reference to the original documents of political events, including official papers. Correspondence, scrapbooks, awards, press releases, inaugural memorabilia, appointment calendars, planning papers, diaries, minutes from important meetings, and copies of legal and financial documents are invaluable. They must be saved and archived. Likewise, photographs and audio and video tapes of meetings and other events must be saved. To help achieve this end, officials should label—with dates, full names, and titles—all their materials. If there is some question as to an item's historical value, it is best to keep the item and leave the decision to the archivists or librarians who will be ultimately responsible for preserving the collection. (Of course, restrictions can be placed on the use of sensitive material.) The more information a collection provides, the more valuable the collection is.

Preserving or archiving documents is just as important as collecting them. Many sources may be consulted for assistance: local universities and public librarians, state archivists, and national repositories such as the Library of Congress, the National Archives, the Moorland-Spingarn Research Center at Howard University, all in Washington, D.C., or the Amistad Research Center at Tulane University in New Orleans. The deciding factors in choosing where to send materials should be an institution's commitment to preserving materials and to making them available to researchers.

Stronger efforts to collect and preserve black political documents are especially needed at the city, state, and regional levels. The weekly batch of news articles received at the Joint Center indicates that black political figures are making significant breakthroughs at these levels. November 1990 saw several historic electoral victories, including the election of the first black Republican to statewide office in Oklahoma, J.C. Watts, now the state's corporation commissioner; the first black woman state senator in Tennessee's history, Thelma Harper; and the first black elected to the statewide office of Clerk of Indiana's supreme court and court of appeals, Dwayne M. Brown. In January of this year, Daniel Blue became North Carolina's first black house speaker. He was sworn into his new office by Judge Henry E. Frye, North Carolina's first black state supreme court justice.

The responsibility for ensuring that tomorrow's history books accurately recount today's political events starts with black public officials themselves. They can play an important part in the preservation of black history by supporting public funding of institutions that house black collections in their local communities; by collecting documentation of their own experiences in office; and by contributing to biographies and authoring autobiographical works. Responsibly serving the people must be viewed as including the duty to preserve black history itself. ■

Ms. Pilgrim is director of Information Resources at the Joint Center.

Registration

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national interest, and especially where there is a differential impact on groups within the population, particularly on minorities. This right obviously applies in the case of voter registration, and presents the most compelling argument of all for federally mandated reform.

Current practices in most states have the effect of discriminating against certain groups of potential voters—those who move often, students, disabled and elderly people—by requiring them to register in person at offices with restricted hours. Even states with mail registration often add requirements, such as notarizing the application, that further complicate the process.

Motor voter, agency-based, or mail-in registration systems would allow constant updating of registration and residence, keeping a much larger number of voters on the rolls. Coupled with reciprocity among political jurisdictions, these systems could virtually eliminate the problem of voters' being erroneously dropped from the rolls. More importantly, they could significantly cut the cost of keeping voter lists current.

The Fight for Congressional Approval

The prospects for Senate passage of S. 250 seem brighter this year than last. In the 101st Congress, the voter registration reform bill had no Republican cosponsors and meager Republican support in the Senate. But the current bill is cosponsored by Republican Senators Mark Hatfield and David Durenberger of Minnesota and they are expected to be joined by other GOP colleagues.

While the White House indicated during the last Congress that it had some problems with the reform legislation, it never threatened a veto. Nevertheless, the White House may have been behind the Senate Republican opposition that blocked a floor vote, and it may try to play a similar role in the 102nd Congress. With the current Republican cosponsors of S. 250, such a strategy would be less successful this time.

Support for the legislation has grown as the urgency of reform and the possibility of passage have increased. Public interest groups, including "good government" groups and civil rights and civil liberties organizations, as well as groups representing women and the disabled, have joined with religious organizations, labor unions, student groups, and education associations to endorse it. The bill is also supported by the National Association of Secretaries of State and by the U.S. Conference of Mayors. On March 1, the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights added passage of S. 250 to its list of high priorities.

Among reform supporters, the chief remaining issue concerns which mechanism would be established for the cleaning of lists. During last year's discussions, a number of civil rights groups were wary of list-cleaning provisions added to gain the support of Republicans and conservative Democrats. Their concerns and efforts, borne of decades of negative experiences with election officials seeking to limit minority access to the ballot, resulted in considerable tightening of the language and added protections in the purge provision.

The Senate Rules and Administration Committee scheduled hearings for March 21 and April 10. The committee chairman, Sen. Wendell Ford, has said he intends to consider possible amendments and to review recent registration and election research. Remaining differences over the list-cleaning provisions are expected to be addressed so the committee can proceed to its April 17 mark-up of the bill followed by immediate floor action.

On and off Capitol Hill, there is a growing consensus that the reform of voter registration will be the most important political empowerment weapon of the 1990s. There is also growing confidence that a federal bill will be completed in the 102nd Congress, marking another victory in the decades-old struggle for voting rights. ■

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Black Economic Advancement: New Goals for a New Decade

As Discrimination Continues to Plague Our Society, Black Economic Empowerment Remains on the Nation's Unfinished Civil Rights Agenda

The Downside of Downsizing the Military

Plans for Massive Cuts in Military Personnel Will Strain the Economy and Reduce Opportunities for Black Americans

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Black Economic Advancement: New Goals for a New Decade

by Eddie N. Williams

When scholars and analysts assess the second half of the twentieth century and probe as far into the next century as their skills will allow, few issues will loom larger than race relations as a defining force in our national character.

On the one hand, history books will surely speak of what is fairly seen as a social revolution over the past fifty years. Through the powers of law, politics, and moral suasion, walls of segregation have been razed and most racial barriers have been shattered. From the desegregation of public schools in 1954 to the election of the first election of a black governor in 1989, we have witnessed developments that once were dreams deferred.

On the other hand, history books that chronicle success must also sound a warning about the problems that lie ahead. Nowhere is this warning more vividly expressed than in the National Academy of Sciences report, *A Common Destiny: Blacks and American Society*, which concludes on these two somber notes: "significant discrimination against blacks is still a feature of American society" and "barring unforeseen events or policy changes, the future status of black Americans will continue to stagnate and decline, with tragic consequences for blacks and for American society."

This dire warning is based on the many problems that remain unsolved, including poverty, joblessness, drug abuse, teenage parenthood, and low levels of educational achievement, especially among young black males. Despite a growing black middle class and the advance of a number of blacks into the economic mainstream, blacks lag behind whites in all economic areas, and the general economic condition of the black community is deteriorating.

There are no quick solutions to these complex problems; nor is there a single way to address them. However, economic stability and advancement bear a critical relationship to each of these problem areas. If blacks were better off economically, it stands to reason that they would be better off socially as well.

It is not surprising, therefore, that strengthening the role of blacks in the American economy is widely viewed as the nation's most important unfinished civil rights agenda. Indeed, the economic advancement of black Americans must become the new cutting edge in our pursuit of racial justice. With our national economy ailing, one might argue that this is not a good time for black Americans to push for economic empowerment. After all, most civil rights gains have come during periods when the economy was strong. Nevertheless, the circumstances are different today. Corporate and government leaders are slowly recognizing that it is in the national interest for blacks to become a significant boost for the economy rather than a drag on it.

There are at least two incentives for the nation to vigorously pursue black economic empowerment now. One is the rising chorus of black voices demanding a bigger slice of the nation's economic pie. A second incentive comes from the competition we face from Japan, Germany, and, beginning in 1992, the European Community. In the face of this competition and our acknowledged declining productivity, rising unemployment, and nagging federal deficit, the nation can ill afford to ignore the economic potential inherent in its black population (and its Hispanic population as well) which comprises a greater proportion of the national labor force with each year that passes.

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Since blacks' economic interests are the same as the nation's economic interests, namely productivity, competitiveness, and profitability, it would seem that for pragmatic reasons, if not for moral reasons, corporate and government leaders should promote the economic advancement of black Americans. Thus, what is good for blacks would also profit the society as a whole—a not insignificant convergence of interests.

There are several strategies blacks themselves can pursue to accelerate their advancement. The first—and the most obvious—is to substantially increase their levels of educational involvement, attainment, and achievement. Too many blacks are losing the battle for better jobs and incomes before they ever get to the labor market because of soaring school drop-out rates and poor educational performance. Education and training are the primary vehicles for upward mobility in our society. We must insist on the best educational systems that government can provide. We must also insist on a new attitude among our young people that embraces educational excellence and intellectual competitiveness.

Strengthening the role of blacks in the American economy is widely viewed as the nation's most important unfinished civil rights agenda. Indeed, the economic advancement of black Americans must become the new cutting edge in our pursuit of racial justice . . . Corporate and government leaders are slowly recognizing that it is in the national interest for blacks to become a significant boost for the economy rather than a drag on it.

Second, we must make a stronger commitment to black entrepreneurship and to investing more capital in black-owned business ventures. All around us are a growing number of successful black businessmen and -women and a much larger pool of aspiring entrepreneurs. We need to support their enterprises and their aspirations and to press for an end to the obstacles that impede the development of viable black-owned establishments.

The third strategy follows naturally from the first two. With better jobs, better earnings, and more prosperous businesses, we will also increase the buying power of black consumers. Blacks must use that increased purchasing power, and the increased political clout that comes with it, to put a larger goal squarely on the public agenda: wiping out poverty.

Fourth, black leaders must become major players on the economic stage. They must fully understand and engage the rapidly evolving new economic order in all its complexity. Succeeding in this new environment requires identifying specific objectives and fashioning strategies to achieve them.

Fifth, blacks must strengthen and expand their self-help initiatives. Many of today's problems—family disintegration, drug abuse, crime—must be addressed by blacks themselves in concert with government action. Our rich tradition of self help, which dates back to our African heritage, is alive today in thousands of efforts sponsored by our churches, our sororities and fraternities, and our civic, service, and social organizations. Blacks must expand these efforts to the benefit of their community and nation.

Sixth, we must continue to press ahead on the political front where impressive victories already have been won. Since 1965, the number of black elected officials has grown from around 300 to over 7,500. They serve their constituencies in Congress and at the state, local, and county levels. As the number of black elected officials has grown, we have witnessed an increase in the number of blacks competing for public office at all levels, including an unprecedented number elected in predominantly white jurisdictions. Some recent victors are well-known: Governor L. Douglas Wilder in Virginia, Mayor David N. Dinkins in New York. Less well known nationally are Illinois Attorney General Roland Burris, Oklahoma Corporation Commissioner J.C. Watts, and Judge Morris Overstreet of the Texas State Court of Criminal Appeals.

Good politics often makes strange bedfellows. So blacks must be open to coalition partnerships from every quarter: business and labor, the Democratic and Republican parties, liberals and conservatives, other minorities, and women. A critical and urgent challenge for African-Americans today is to seek common cause with Hispanics, Asian-Americans, and Jews who share similar values and aspirations.

Black economic advancement depends not only on self-help and individual initiative but on sound public policies as well. Black economic progress, therefore, is inseparable from continued political progress.

This brings me to the seventh strategy: we must not let government off the hook. The Reagan revolution must be overturned. A fundamental and abiding truth is that the American government should be an active agent for improving the quality of life for *all* its people and for responding to community needs in times of crisis. Therefore, even in the face of huge budget deficits and large budget cuts, the people in need—farmers, children, veterans, immigrants, students, the elderly, small businessmen, minorities—should continue to be the focus of special attention and funding from government. The social and economic crisis in the black community today deserves no less attention. ■

The Downside of Downsizing the Military

Plans for Massive Cuts in Military Personnel Will Strain the Economy and Reduce Opportunities for Black Americans

by Michael Shane

Last September, the West German government agreed to pay the Soviet Union $8 billion for the movement, resettlement, and retraining of some 360,000 Soviet troops stationed in what was then East Germany. The U.S.S.R. was thinking ahead and looking for ways to ease the trauma of shifting this mass of people from military to civilian employment in an already weak economy.

Here in the United States, as our own forces return from the Persian Gulf and the military is required to make similar cutbacks, it is ironic that we find ourselves with much the same problem as the Soviets. Both the government and the private sector should be making plans to accommodate the large influx of Americans who will be trading desert fatigues for business suits and blue collars.

As a result of the "end of the Cold War," including *glasnost* in the Soviet Union, political changes in Eastern Europe, and progress in strategic and conventional arms reduction, Congress and the Bush administration decided to reduce active duty personnel strength by over 500,000 by the middle of this decade. Each branch of the U.S. military will be cut significantly. While the reduction will cause jobs to disappear for military personnel of all races, blacks in uniform will be forced into a civilian job market that is decidedly less friendly to them than to others. Work must begin now to insure that once the "welcome home" parades are over, those displaced by this downsizing can be absorbed into the civilian work force.

Last fall, General Colin L. Powell, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, stated that prior to the crisis in the Persian Gulf he had been pressured by black leaders who were concerned that restructuring and downsizing the military would squeeze out opportunities for black Americans. In October, Lieutenant General Donald W. Jones, the deputy assistant secretary of defense for military manpower and personnel policy, briefed NAACP officials (at their request) on the impact the draw-down would have on African-Americans. Iraq's August invasion of Kuwait and the resultant operations "Desert Shield" and "Desert Storm" supplanted concern over the draw-down with alarm that blacks were disproportionately represented in combat units. The economic impact of troop reductions was temporarily lost in desert sands and political rhetoric. Now that Desert Storm is all but concluded, it is necessary to reexamine the consequences of the downsizing plan.

U.S. Army Colonel Michael Shane is a senior military fellow at the Joint Center.

Trimming the Budget

The Department of Defense (DoD) FY92 budget projects a 25 percent reduction in active-duty military forces (from 2.1 million to 1.58 million) by 1995-96. Since blacks comprise 20 percent of the military and are likely to remain at that level, at least 100,000 fewer blacks can be expected to be on active duty five years from now. That projection could be even higher because the Army, which has the largest percentage of blacks (29 percent compared to 16 percent for the Navy, 15 percent for the Air Force, and 19 percent for the Marine Corps) is currently slated for the largest cut—214,000 troops or 28.5 percent. Thus, the number of blacks on active duty in all branches of the service could be reduced by as many as 110,000.

With the end of Desert Storm, a substantial exodus will take place within the next few months. Most reservists and National Guard members are likely to return to civilian jobs waiting for them. But there will also be a larger than normal number of active duty separations from the services, and these people will be looking for new employment. This surge of departures will occur because normal retirements and discharges were delayed during the Persian Gulf crisis. In the Army, for example, these so-called "Stop Loss" provisions applied to some 32,000 soldiers (over 9,000 of whom may be black) who, having been held past their discharge or retirement dates, must now be quickly released.

All of this, added to normally heavy summer discharges, means a larger than usual group of ex-service members will be trying to enter the civilian labor force this summer. With the recession already pushing unemployment to 6.8 percent, its highest level in four years, these veterans will be coming home to a weak job market.

Lost Opportunities for Youths

The reductions agreed upon by the Bush administration and Congress are slated to occur between fiscal years 1992 and 1996. The Defense Department does not plan to accomplish this reduction by summarily discharging over half a million service members. In briefing the NAACP, the Department's representative stated that the reduction would be accomplished "without forced separations, where possible." DoD plans to achieve 60 to 80 percent of the draw-down by "reducing accessions," that is, by cutting back on the number of people recruited into the services. "Voluntary releases" (normal separations after fixed terms

April 1991

POLITICAL TRENDLETTER®

Inside This Issue:

- The number of black women in politics is increasing at a faster rate than that of any other group in American politics.
- The controversy over federal scholarships for minorities has been revived as the Department of Education gets a new chief.
- A new commission has been formed to investigate the crisis of black males in society.
- Across the Nation: Richard Hatcher attempts a comeback as mayor of Gary; and the mayoral race heats up in Philadelphia.

Black Women Are Fastest Growing Group in Politics

In electoral politics, black women now constitute the fastest-growing group, according to data compiled over the past two decades by the Joint Center. "The increase in the number of blacks winning election to public office is a real success story," says the Joint Center's president EDDIE N. WILLIAMS. "An even bigger success story is the rising level of achievement among black women in politics. Just two examples are the elections of mayors SHARON PRATT DIXON in Washington, D.C., and CARRIE PERRY in Hartford, Connecticut, which have brought black women into the arena of big city leadership."

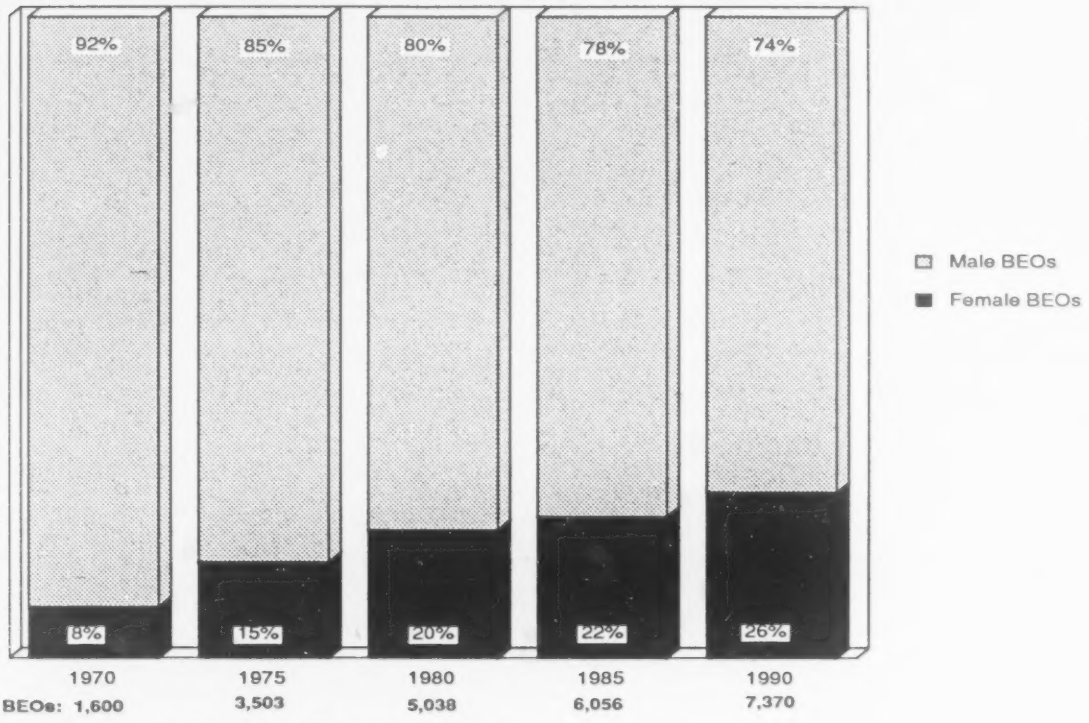
Since 1970, the overall number of black women elected to local, county, state, and congressional offices has risen from 131 to 1,950. In 1970, only one out of every 12 black elected officials was a woman; today the ratio is one out of four. In state elective offices overall, black women constitute about 26 percent of all black elected officials. In 1976, just 38 state legislators were black women. As of 1989, that figure had grown to 96—78 state assembly members and 18 senators. And the numbers are still growing: in the 1990 elections, 33 of the 70 newly elected black state legislators—or nearly half—were women.

This growth is likely to continue. Women now make up about 37 percent of all BEOs on school boards, which are traditionally "entry-level" political positions; many of these female board members are likely to move up to higher levels of office over time.

Black women have already been moving into positions of greater influence within the elected bodies on which they already serve. Two examples in California are State Senator DIANA WATSON and Representative GWEN MOORE, who chair the committees on Health and Human Services and on Utilities and Commerce, respectively. In Alabama, the Committee on the Constitution and Elections is chaired by State Representative BOBBIE MCDOWELL. And in Michigan, representative TEOLA HUNTER chairs the Economic Development and Energy Committee and is speaker pro tempore of the state house.

Greater power is also accruing to black women within their local, state, and national party structures. This is putting them in a strong position for future advancement. In Texas, blacks are the Democratic party committeewomen in six districts and a black woman is vice chair of the state party. Half of the seats on the black caucus of the Democratic National Committee are held by black women, giving them an equal voice with black men within their party'sdecision-making body. Williams concludes, "The impressive political achievements of black women reflect their longstanding prominent role within the black community and their extraordinary commitment to public service. As black Americans continue to expand their role in the nation's political mainstream, black women are becoming a highly visible and increasingly influential part of that leadership."

Growth in the Proportion of Women Among Black Elected Officials, 1970-1990



Source: Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies, Inc.

Federal Minority Scholarships: Act II

On March 20, just days after being sworn in as Secretary of Education, former Republican governor of Tennessee LAMAR ALEXANDER announced in a news conference that he will initiate new federal guidelines on awarding scholarships that assist minority college students. The guidelines will be issued following a review of the department's current scholarship policies.

Last December, the Education Department's assistant secretary for civil rights, **MICHAEL WILLIAMS**, stirred up a major controversy when he wrote a letter to organizers of the Fiesta Bowl football game in Tempe, Arizona, who intended to contribute $200,000 for the two schools that played in the New Years Day game, declaring that minority scholarships were illegal. Williams, who is black, charged that "race-exclusive" scholarships violate Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and warned that colleges which continue to award such scholarships would be denied federal funds. The letter immediately raised the ire of the higher education community—including college presidents and financial aid administrators as well as parents and students.

Financial aid officers oppose Williams' letter ruling because it places a cloud over the legality of scholarship programs already run by thousands of academic institutions. Some university administrators have attacked the premise of Williams' letter—that scholarships which benefit minorities are indeed "race-exclusive." To examine the nature of these programs, the National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities (NAICU) surveyed its 826 member schools in December. The survey showed that most scholarship programs use a variety of reward criteria apart from race, including financial need and academic merit. It found that only 13.7 percent of the scholarship programs and 2.8 percent of student aid fund could be considered purely race based. In an attempt at damage control, the Bush administration has modified Williams' decision by permitting federally assisted universities to administer "restricted scholarships" earmarked for minorities as long as funds come from private sources and are not financed out of the institutions' general aid moneys. That move, however, did not quell the storm.

Alexander has said that the current uncertainty about the policy exists because the department's decisions have been rare and inconsistent during the past decade. He has stated that one goal of his policy review is to clear up confusion about the extent to which a student's race or national origin may be considered in awarding financial aid. At his March press conference, Alexander said his review would include a survey of colleges and universities to determine the features and rationales of existing financial aid programs that consider race or national origin. Views from the academic community and other interested parties will also be considered in the review. Alexander predicted that the review process, which will be conducted in consultation with the Justice Department, will take about six months. When finished, new Education Department guidelines will be published and distributed to colleges and universities. Final decisions on pending disputes over scholarship awards to minorities have been postponed until the new guidelines are issued.

Meanwhile, a new player in the controversy surfaced during congressional hearings conducted on March 19 and 20 by the House Government Operations Subcommittee on Human Resources and Intergovernmental Relations. The subcommittee learned that Williams was not the originator of the letter in the first place, but that Deputy Assistant Secretary of Education RICHARD D. KOMER, who is white, was the moving force behind its release. The House panel also discovered that the Education Department began to develop the scholarship policy during the Reagan administration with input from some right-wing organizations, including the Washington Legal Foundation. Komer initially refused to appear before the subcommittee and was subsequently forced to reveal his role in the policy decision under congressional subpoena.

Commission to Address Problems of Black Men

New York City Mayor DAVID N. DINKINS, Virginia Governor L. DOUGLAS WILDER, U.S. Senator TERRY SANFORD of North Carolina, and U.S. Commission on Civil Rights Chairman ARTHUR FLETCHER have joined with other political leaders to establish the 21st Century Commission on African American Males, which will assist Congress in developing a national policy for addressing the crisis facing black men in this country. In March, U.S. Senator DON RIEGLE (D-Mich.), one of the commission's honorary board members, convened a roundtable hearing on the issue before the housing and urban affairs subcommittee of the Senate Banking Committee. The crisis was framed in grim testimony to the subcommittee: black males have the lowest life expectancy of any group in the United States; their unemployment rate is more than twice as high as that of white males; black men with college degrees are three times more likely to be unemployed than their white counterparts; approximately one in four black men between the ages of 20 and 29 is behind bars, and they receive longer prison sentences than whites who have committed the same crimes. Closely related to the crisis is the 20 percent decrease in marriages among black couples over the last 20 years.

A second hearing has been scheduled by the subcommittee in conjunction with the commission's "National Conference on the Crisis Status of Black Males in America," to be held May 22 to 25 in Washington. According to **KATHY WELLMAN**, executive director of the 30-member bipartisan commission, the May conference will bring together elected officials, civic leaders, educators, corporate executives, and foundation representatives to develop a national policy initiative consisting of achievable recommendations for mitigating the problems confronting the black male. "Clearly this is not a black problem but a national concern, and that is why the goal is for a national policy initiative," said Wellman. She said that in addition to the second congressional hearing convened by Riegle, the conference will feature 11 panels, including education, health care, black family life, employment, and drugs. After the conference, the commission members will continue to meet to develop recommendations.

In looking at the problem, Senator Sanford noted, it is important to remember the other side of the picture. He reminded participants at the March hearing that 75 percent of black men aged 20 to 29 have not had serious encounters with the law and approximately 56 percent of black males between the ages of 16 and 24 are gainfully employed. "In other words, the complete story of black males in this country is not one of failure. The level of success exceeds the level of failure," said Sanford. He continued, "It is toward these success stories that public policymakers must look if we are to frame policies to reduce those environmental factors which threaten the growth and development of future generations of young black males."

In his testimony at the March hearing, Joint Center president Eddie N. Williams, a member of the commission's board, said "I personally would not expect that there would ever be a policy for young black males; but rather that public policies dealing with employment and education, forexample, will acknowledge and be sensitive to the problems of young black males as we try to formulate our programmatic solutions."

Across the Nation

INDIANA: One of the nation's first black mayors of a major city, RICHARD HATCHER, is trying to regain his position as mayor of Gary. In the May 7 Democratic primary, Hatcher must face one-term incumbent THOMAS BARNES, who is also black, as well as seven other candidates.

Barnes was a Hatcher ally during the former mayor's 20 years in office. But the two became embroiled in a bitter election primary in 1987, in which Barnes prevailed. Hatcher has said his bid to regain the mayorship is not motivated by revenge but is an effort to return the city to better times. The biggest campaign issue is how to revive the city's economy. The community is divided over a proposal to raise new revenue by allowing casino gambling, an idea that Barnes, alone among the candidates, publicly supports. Hatcher has criticized Barnes for failing to implement an economic development plan, charging "not a house has been built, not a brick has been laid" since Hatcher left office in 1987.

Barnes supporters counter that Hatcher himself was ousted in 1987 because of his 20 years of ineffectiveness, and that one term has not given Barnes enough time to repair the harm done to the city during the Hatcher years.

A white Democratic candidate, **SCOTT KING**, is also running. A political newcomer, King is a former state and federal prosecutor who cites the need for economic development and more efficient management of city hall as his reasons for seeking the mayor's seat. He says "City hall must be revamped to operate like a business and not like a political organization." If elected, King said he plans to reorganize the police department and the school board and attract private investment for development. King claims to have attracted a silent following in the black community, but he has yet to receive a major black endorsement.

PENNSYLVANIA: Eight candidates—three black and five white—are vying for the seat of two-term black Philadelphia mayor WILSON GOODE in the city's hotly contested May 21 primary. Goode is prevented by law from running for a third term. Among the black candidates are LUCIEN BLACKWELL, a former city councilman and union leader; GEORGE R. BURRELL, JR., a city councilman and attorney; and JAMES S. WHITE, former city managing director. In addition, the Democratic contest includes two white candidates, former two-term district attorney EDWARD RENDELL and PETER HEARN, a millionaire attorney who had been the chancellor of the Philadelphia Bar Association.

Among the Republican contenders is **RONALD CASTILLE**, who resigned as district attorney before announcing his candidacy. Castille has been endorsed by the Republican Party leadership and seems to have the inside track to that party's nomination. Another GOP hopeful is municipal financial consultant and former liberal Democrat **SAM KATZ**, who switched parties to run for mayor. Finally, there is Democrat turned Republican **FRANK RIZZO**, former police commissioner and two-term mayor. Rizzo, who has strong support among white ethnics and blue collar workers, gained a reputation for being hostile to blacks during his tenure as mayor from 1971 to 1979.

As the campaign stands now, Goode appears likely to be succeeded by a white mayor. Among the Democrats, Rendell has taken a strong lead in the opinion polls. Furthermore, the three black candidates in the race are certain to split the black vote (the city is 40 percent black). Rendell has been a Pennsylvania special prosecutor and in 1986 was a gubernatorial candidate. Although he's popular among both white and black Democrats and has been endorsed by black state senator **HARDY WILLIAMS**, Rendell is not a shoe-in. Many blacks have not forgiven him for reneging on his promise not to run against Goode in the 1987 primary.

Blackwell and Burrell, who are considered the leading black candidates, appeal to very different segments of the black community. Blackwell's reputation is as a street-savvy, grass-roots politician who has been on the city's political scene for a long time. A former state senator, he served 17 years on the city council and is in his 18th year as president of the International Longshoremen's Association, Local 332. Through the years, Blackwell has developed rock-solid working class backing in the black community, but opponents warn that in the general election he wouldn't attract white cross-over votes .

Burrell, by contrast, is a corporate attorney who served two years on the city council and was deputy mayor from 1980 to 1983. He stakes his hopes on the multiracial coalition that brought Goode into office. He has been endorsed by powerful black Philadelphia congressman **WILLIAM H. GRAY** and by other established black political figures. Despite these assets, polls indicate that his candidacy hasn't caught on with many voters. Whoever becomes mayor will have to deal with Philadelphia's monumental fiscal crisis—the one issue that has dominated the campaign. The city has been on the brink of bankruptcy for the past year and its projected budget deficit for the next fiscal year is $230 million.

The conventional wisdom is that in this heavily Democratic city, a candidate from the reigning party will prevail in November. But there is also talk that primary losers from either or both parties might run in the general election as independent candidates. If that happens, all bets are off.

of service) and early retirements would account for another 15 to 25 percent. And only 10 to 30 percent of the cutback would be accomplished by a reduction in force (RIF) or "forced separations."

Those most affected will therefore be young people coming out of high school, many of whose predecessors looked to the military for their first full-time job opportunity. These youngsters are very employable, since the services have for the past several years accepted, almost exclusively, high school graduates who score well on standard military aptitude tests and who are unencumbered by arrest records or histories of serious alcohol or drug use. Yet, they traditionally face difficulty in entering the job market and experience higher unemployment than any other age group. The military draw-down and the current recession will further limit their options.

Helping Those Forced Out of Uniform

Rep. Beverly Byron (D-Md.), chair of the House Armed Services Subcommittee on Military Personnel and Compensation, says, "I think it is important and critical how we treat our personnel after Desert Storm is over." She asks, "What do we do to help those personnel and what policies will [we] make for those people that have been called up and have gone willingly and served so very, very far away? What are we going to do to make sure that their families are protected and taken care of?"

Congress and the DoD have begun to provide for service members who will be forced to leave the military because of the draw-down. The 1991 National Defense Authorization Act (passed by Congress in October 1990) offers transition assistance in several areas. Officers forced to leave the service have always been eligible for a separation (severance) payment, but for the first time enlisted personnel will be eligible as well. The payments, which will vary by rank and years of service, would amount to approximately $18,000 for a mid-grade enlisted person with 10 years' service. Other separation benefits include access to temporary medical care, temporary commissary and post exchange privileges (military operated discount retail stores), and temporary government housing.

Unfortunately, these are only short-term measures. For the longer term, one of the most promising programs now being put together is the Army Career and Alumni Program, or ACAP. Linda White, ACAP Program Coordinator, says that services are currently available at seven pilot sites (five in the United States and one each in Germany and Korea) and will become on-line at more locations by the end of this summer. For soldiers leaving the Army, ACAP offers services such as job counseling and referrals through newly created Job Assistance Centers.

Army officials are also exploring arrangements with states and corporations, hopeful that through such agreements, separating soldiers can quickly be linked up with available civilian employment. The Army recently signed an agreement with the Florida Department of Education to expedite job referral and placement for new veterans in five areas of employment: transportation, health services, law enforcement, education services, and tourism.

Whether military service is viewed as either a positive or a negative, the fact remains that soon, well over 100,000 fewer black Americans will be employed as uniformed members of the Army, Navy, Air Force and Marines. They will be entering a job market that for now, at least, is decidedly inhospitable to them. Federal, state, and local governments, and especially potential employers, need to begin now to prepare for the coming dislocations. These Americans have already demonstrated their value as citizens and future employees. They must be given the same opportunities in civilian life they would have had in the military. This is doubly true for black Americans. ■

The views expressed here are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the policy or position of the U.S. Army, Department of Defense, or the U.S. government.

Military Service and Opportunity

There are many budgetary benefits to the military reductions that have been agreed upon by Congress and the administration, including additional funds freed up for domestic spending, to name but one. But for thousands of black Americans currently serving in the military or looking ahead to military service as part of their career plans, the draw-down will reduce solid job opportunities and excellent prospects of upward mobility. Although it may be an indictment of the rest of the nation, the military is arguably the most integrated element of our society. Nowhere else has black leadership been accepted as fully or black accomplishment more greatly rewarded. The armed forces today represent the closest thing we have to a true "meritocracy."

In recent testimony before the House Armed Services Committee, General Powell stated, "I wish that there were other activities in our society and in our nation that were as open [to minorities] as the military is to upward mobility, to achievement, to allowing them in. I wish that corporate America, I wish the trade unions around the nation would show the same level of openness and opportunity to minorities that the military has."

Looking at salary alone, the military compares favorably with the civilian job market. According to a Congressional Budget Office study, the average 18-year-old who is employed full-time earns $800 to $1,000 a month. A private in the Army takes home about $700 a month but, when benefits are factored in—housing, meals, medical and dental care—that private's monthly compensation rises to over $1,600.

The general satisfaction that blacks feel with their careers and lifestyles in the military is most convincingly demonstrated by DoD reenlistment statistics. After their first term, 62 percent of blacks in the Army sign up for another stint. This rate is not only high in and of itself, it is also substantially higher than the reenlistment rate for any other ethnic group; Army reenlistment figures stand at 48 percent for Hispanic and 38 percent for whites. — ***M.S.***

Black America and African Liberation

Second of Two Historical Articles on the Relationship Between Black Americans and Africa

by Walter C. Carrington

Throughout the twentieth century black Americans have fought for racial dignity on two fronts. While the major battle was at home against segregation and discrimination, a campaign was also waged on behalf of Africa, an ancestral homeland struggling to break the chains of colonial domination.

One man more than any other symbolized the two-pronged struggle —W.E.B. Du Bois, a founder of the N.A.A.C.P. and the main promulgator of the doctrine of Pan-Africanism. When he proclaimed in 1900 that "the problem of the twentieth century is the problem of the color line" he defined a barrier that limited black aspirations in Africa as much as in America. Du Bois's urging of a cooperative—a Pan-African—effort to erase that line was the opening salvo of a century of struggle. Black Americans would explore many, often divergent, paths leading towards reconciliation with their African heritage. Some would attempt to influence U.S. foreign policy towards Africa, many would reclaim their African cultural roots, while others would seek to separate themselves from white America either by emigrating back to Africa or by creating "African" enclaves within the borders of the United States.

The progenitor of the policy of using black American pressure to lobby for the decolonization of Africa was W. E. B. Du Bois. A distinguished scholar and activist, hewas the first black to receive a Ph.D. from Harvard. His long and productive life began in America at the dawn of Reconstruction and ended in Ghana, 94 years later, on the very eve of the 1963 March on Washington.

At the end of World War I, Du Bois sought to turn Germany's loss into Africa's gain by freeing the German colonies. With the assistance of Blaise Diagne, the Senegalese member of the French parliament, he convened in Paris the first Pan-African Conference which was timed to parallel the post-war Peace Conference in 1919. It was attended mainly by blacks from the United States and the Caribbean who petitioned the Peace Conference in nearby Versailles through a series of anti-colonial resolutions.

Most demands on behalf of African nationalism fared no better with the victorious Allies than similar pleas by Kurds and Armenians for relief from Turkish and Russian rule. The one exception was the fate of the former German colonies. Du Bois and his fellow Pan-Africanists urged that they not be transferred to other colonial powers but instead be placed under international supervision. This led to the establishment of the Mandates Commission, under which the League of Nations kept South West Africa (now Namibia) from being incorporated into South Africa. Namibia, Cameroon, Togo, and Tanganyika were later transformed into Trust Territories under the United Nations.

The Raising of Mass Consciousness

While the Pan-African movement united black intellectuals in the Americas and Africa, it left the masses of blacks in the African diaspora largely unmoved. As the Pan-Africanists were convening in various European capitals during the 1920s, the condition of blacks in the United States was deteriorating, with white mob violence flaring up in Northern cities and Southern towns. It was during these desperate times that Marcus Garvey arrived from Jamaica in 1916 to become the greatest mass leader black America had yet known. His doctrine of "Africa for the Africans at home and abroad" quickly caught on. Garvey instilled pride of self and heritage and called for a return to Africa—of which he named himself provisional president. At the height of his influence, in the early 1920s, Garvey had a following of more than a million people. Had not the U.S. government successfully brought controversial mail fraud charges against him in 1923 and deported him in 1927, there is no telling how much stronger his movement might have grown during the Great Depression.

Garvey never got to Africa himself and his resettlement plans did not succeed, but he had a great impact on nationalist thought in Africa and on the views of ordinary black Americans toward their African roots. His book, *The Philosophy and Opinions of Marcus Garvey*, influenced a broad spectrum of African thinking. Kwame Nkrumah, the first president of Ghana, later wrote that of all the literature he had studied none did more to fire his enthusiasm for the liberation of his country than Garvey's *Philosophy*.

Organizing to Influence U.S. Policy

The consciousness about Africa that Garvey had resurrected among the black masses did not disappear with his deportation. The embers of that fire flamed up again in 1936 when Italy invaded Ethiopia. Racial pride erupted as never before when Emperor Haile Selassie stood before the League of Nations and warned of the holocaust that would

(Continued on next page)

Mr. Carrington, a consultant on international affairs at the Joint Center, is a former United States ambassador to Senegal.

come if the nations of the world did not aid his country and embargo Fascist Italy.

The Ethiopian war became the main topic of conversation wherever blacks gathered. Volunteers in America were recruited to go and fight alongside their African brothers. And in a championship boxing match that took on mythic proportions, Joe Louis's fists became instruments of vindication for a whole people when he delivered a beating to the Italian, Primo Carnera.

Over the next two and a half decades, several organizations would be formed to influence U.S. foreign policy. In 1937, Max Yergan, the first black faculty member of the City College of New York, organized the Council on African Affairs (CAA), the first black-led group dedicated to swaying American policy towards Africa. The Council, whose leadership included Paul Robeson, Ralph Bunche, Adam Clayton Powell, W.E.B. Du Bois, and Mordecai Johnson, worked closely with African nationalists and labor leaders and lobbied the U.S. government on their behalf. It paid special attention to South Africa and forged links with the African National Congress. The Council's potential was curtailed in the post-war years by the rise of McCarthyism and charges that it was a Soviet front.

Sensing once again the opportunities for African liberation offered by the conclusion of war—this time World War II—a fifth Pan-African conference, chaired by Du Bois, met in Manchester, England in 1945. It was attended by such future African heads of state as Nkrumah of Ghana and Jomo Kenyatta of Kenya, who used the meeting as a springboard for the independence movements which, over the next two decades, were to liberate their continent.

Anti-colonial agitation in Africa during the 1950s caught the attention of more and more American blacks. Many supported Kenya's Mau Mau rebellion and some emigrated to Ghana after independence in 1957. During that period, two important but short-lived groups emerged, the American Society for African Culture (AMSAC) and the American Negro Leadership Conference on Africa (ANLCA). AMSAC was formed by American delegates at a 1956 conference of black intellectuals in Paris called by the francophone African magazine, *Presence Africain*. AMSAC brought important African leaders to the United States, held regular conferences on African issues, and published a leading journal, *African Forum*. The ANLCA was founded shortly afterwards as the foreign policy arm of a consortium of civil rights, church, and fraternal organizations. Through a Washington office it lobbied the White House, Congress, and the State Department.

Whereas the Council on African Affairs ran afoul of the anti-communist hysteria of the 1950s, AMSAC and ANLCA were undone by a reverse stigma of the 1960s. They were unable to survive revelations that they had accepted funding from the CIA. With the demise of ANLCA, African issues became less and less a matter of priority among mainstream civil rights organizations.

Linking Black Power and African Liberation

Through the 1960s and 1970s, then, it was not in the civil rights mainstream but in countless eddies of mass movements where black nationalism and Pan-Africanism were finding a revival. Responding to the death in 1961 of the charismatic young leader of the Congo, Patrice Lumumba, black nationalists who believed the United States had conspired in his overthrow and murder rioted at the United Nations. It was a watershed event. America's mainstream leaders, black and white, were taken aback by the passions Lumumba's death had unleashed.

Those same leaders were also slow to appreciate the mass appeal of a fiery young Muslim minister who called himself Malcolm X. In 1964, he made his pilgrimage to Mecca. While abroad he made his first visit to Africa and attended the meeting of the Organization of African Unity where he equated the racist practices of the United States with those of South Africa. So while the civil rights movement was turning the energies of black Americans inward and southward, the more militant among the young were flirting with nationalist and Pan-African concepts. Malcolm X had helped these youths to see the larger connection with Africa and to link the American struggle with that of people of color around the globe.

Embracing Malcolm X's ideas, militants took over the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) by electing Stokely Carmichael to replace John Lewis, the organization's more traditionally integrationist head. In 1966, the SNCC took up Carmichael's cry of "Black Power," with its powerful Pan-African connotations.

On another front, Robert Williams, a deposed NAACP leader in North Carolina who argued that blacks had the right to take up arms in self defense, returned from self-imposed exile in Africa to proclaim a new nation. He claimed the five Southern states with the largest black populations—Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, and South Carolina—as "The Republic of New Africa."

Williams' hopes for a black nation in the Black Belt never got much beyond the dedication, in March 1971, of a parcel of land in Mississippi as "the first African capital of the northern Western Hemisphere." This effort to create an African nation within the borders of the United States was no more successful than the earlier attempts by Garvey and others to resettle blacks on African shores.

Challenging U.S. Policy

The passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 had moved the civil rights movement from the streets to the polling booths. A critical mass of blacks was now in the U.S. House of Representatives and, under the leadership of Democratic Congressman Charles Diggs of Detroit, organized the Congressional Black Caucus in 1970. Diggs himself had risen to the chairmanship of the House Subcommittee on African Affairs and had become the most important critic of U.S. policy on Africa.

In 1972, at Howard University, the Caucus sponsored the largest black American conference on Africa ever held in the United States. At the top of the agenda was the

(Continued on next page)

African Liberation

(Continued from page 7)

mobilization of black Americans to press for the elimination of white rule from Southern Africa and the Portuguese colonies of Angola, Mozambique, and Guinea-Bissau.

On the eve of the 1976 presidential election, Diggs convened the National Black Leadership Conference on Southern Africa during the Congressional Black Caucus's annual leadership weekend in September. The conference issued "The African-American Manifesto on Southern Africa," which called for the formation of a black lobby. Representatives of the assembled organizations pledged their financial support. Under the leadership of Randall Robinson, a former staff aide to Diggs who had organized student demonstrations on behalf of sanctions while at Harvard Law School, TransAfrica opened its doors in 1978.

Robinson quickly mobilized the black community to defeat efforts by conservative members of Congress to lift sanctions against the importation of Rhodesian chrome. He persuaded the leaders of nearly all of the major black organizations to go on record for sanctions and rallied black voters in key congressional districts. Sanctions were maintained and TransAfrica, in existence less than a year, was credited with engineering the first major foreign policy victory ever attributed to the direct political intervention of the American black community.

Drought and famine in West Africa had aroused black American concern as much as had the political problems of southern Africa. To address issues of relief and long-term development aid, another important Africa-oriented organization, Africare, was formed in 1971 by C. Payne Lucas, a former Peace Corps official. Working closely with the president of Niger, one of the drought-stricken countries, Lucas began a relief effort centered in the black community. He tapped ordinary black Americans in a way they had not been solicited for an Africa-related cause since the days of Garvey. From all over the country, contributions to help African famine victims poured into Africare's headquarters in Washington.

The presidential election victory of Jimmy Carter in 1976 brought black Americans into the foreign policy mainstream as never before. He appointed Andrew Young, who had been both a lieutenant of Martin Luther King, Jr., and a Georgia congressman, to be ambassador to the United Nations. Partly because of his personal friendship with the President, Young was able to transform his ambassadorship into a politically powerful post. In the public mind he became the embodiment of American policy towards Africa. He and one of his top deputies, Donald McHenry, initiated the process which—in spite of its repudiation for many years by the Reagan Administration—finally led to Namibia's independence.

During the 1980s, black political influence on Africa policy was exerted primarily through the legislative branch. The Free South Africa Movement, which TransAfrica launched soon after the 1984 elections, mobilized the public and lobbied Congress to pass the Comprehensive Anti-Apartheid Act of 1986. The act represented blacks' most important legislative victory since the civil rights laws of the sixties. It demonstrated that their considerable political power could now be harnessed in support of international as well as domestic priorities.

As Countee Cullen has reminded us, black Americans are more than "three centuries removed from the land [their] fathers loved." They cannot with certainty boast, as can many other Americans, of the village or even the country from which their ancestors came. Yet their identification with the continent grows stronger.

Inspired by Alex Haley's *Roots*, thousands, in search of a now proud heritage, have made Africa the vacation land of choice. They cheered and wept when Nelson Mandela emerged in February 1990 from a South African prison. When he came to America to thank them for the crucial support they had given to the anti-apartheid struggle, black America greeted him as a conquering hero as if the land he seeks to free were their own.■

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